

FY 2006 QUARTERLY REPORT (2ND QUARTER)

Cooperative Agreement No. 119-A-00-00-00039-00

**Civic Education
On-Site Technical Assistance**

REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

**Submitted to the
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
By IFES**

January 1, 2006 – March 31, 2006

I. OVERVIEW

IFES-Kazakhstan began the second reporting period of 2006 by working with its partners in implementation of its approved workplan for Year Three of the Cooperative Agreement extension. During the course of the quarter, IFES worked with particular attention towards instilling long-term sustainability of its projects.

IFES strengthened its cooperation with the Ministry of Education and affiliated education institutions such as the Academy of Education and the 12-Year Center. The Ministry welcomed IFES efforts to train teachers and provide general guidance on interactive teaching methodologies that could apply to other subjects outside of civics. Strong cooperation was also seen in support of the annual Civic Education Tournament, with several MoE representatives in attendance. In addition, the Ministry and its local affiliates continued to pave the way for successful implementation of the Student Action Committee and Student Local Government Day projects, both staples of the IFES civic education program in Kazakhstan. IFES has been embraced as a partner contributing to the big-picture discussions of the development of a national civic education curriculum as well as for its implementation of projects in individual schools, embodied by its support of IFES' role in organizing and participating in a joint conference with the Academy of Education scheduled for April to discuss and compare state standards of secondary school education. The push for standards in civic education and integration of sequential learning curricula throughout primary and secondary school, to include the new 12th grade (as well as the fate of civics itself as a stand-alone course), were among the agenda items to be discussed.

The second quarter was significant due to the high volume of activities conducted that contribute to IFES' core mission in the country. Monitoring and evaluation conducted during the quarter measured progress achieved (discussed later in the report) as well as the possibility of long-term sustainability of the projects and what is needed to increase the level of sustainability into the future. Close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and a myriad of partners in the education sphere, as well those in the area of elections, contributed to IFES' high level of contribution to discussions of major, long-term education initiatives, including one that would combine the specific study of elections with a course in higher learning¹. The present discussions over the design of the national civics curriculum in many ways has emerged as the preeminent opportunity to positively affect the educational landscape and instill IFES' imprint on course design, state standards, and teacher training and qualifications that will enable its interactive approach to become the preferred model of instruction. With the 12th grade set to be introduced by 2008, the present discussions and projects are critical to ensuring that civics and the creation of a "democratically-minded" population are priorities for the Ministry of Education for both the short and long term.

¹ A request was made by the CEC to the Ministry of Education to include a course on elections for university-level students. IFES was contacted during the quarter about contributing content and design ideas.

II. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

Civic Education Textbook Project

With an eye towards the future, the IFES-Kazakhstan civic education team worked to incorporate modifications for a revised version of the civics textbook for secondary school students. IFES' Almaty-based Project Coordinator incorporated four written book reviews provided by teachers to include in an updated teachers' guide that provide first-hand guidance and experience in teaching different aspects of the course and in content design. The process of vetting newly-revised and updated chapters of the book (in both Kazakh and Russian) with local experts in education has proven invaluable in granting local buy-in and improving the quality of the materials presented, making them more "user-friendly" to both teachers and students. This also has set the precedent to be followed for other subjects, where practitioners have direct impact on future editions of textbooks rather than by persons not directly connected with the actual implementation end of the effort. In striving to meet the state standards in education, often times those setting the standards are out of touch with on-the-ground practitioners and IFES has attempted to narrow this gap by working through education publications distributed to all secondary school teachers with information about its textbook project and soliciting the opinions of those employing the textbook on how to make it even better. The effort has become a regular part of the IFES monitoring and evaluation campaign, augmented as possible by direct site visits by its field staff to participating schools.

In addition to gaining feedback from teachers, IFES has also updated textbook chapters through contact with students and youth committees. IFES-Kazakhstan's textbook research assistant interviewed a representative of the Youth Congress of Kazakhstan for Chapter 22 on *Who Is an Active Citizen?* This chapter falls into the second part of the textbook which is expected to be re-launched in the Fall of 2006. IFES civic education team collaborated to incorporate feedback from a myriad of sources to render the chapters for Part II and add necessary material, which included an expanded glossary of terms as well as exercises that made maximum use of class time and had highest impact. The government also helped by providing updated information on elections (for the elections-themed chapters of Part II) and local government. Also noteworthy in the second volume are chapters on "Corruption" and "Global Challenges," both of which were requested for inclusion by the Ministry of Education. These chapters join the likes of "Public Opinion and the Mass Media," "Role of Women in the Democratic Process," "Election Systems," "Legal Processes," and comparative information on "Organs of State Power" from Kazakhstan and the international community round out Part II. The "Corruption" and "Global Challenges" chapters are significant in that the government itself recognizes these issues as germane to the study of civics and active citizenship as well as the need to hold public officials accountable. Increasingly, Kazakhstan has viewed itself as not only a regional leader but a player on the international stage, and it has promoted the view that terrorism needs to be combated as a threat to security and democracy. Helping the government to define "terrorism" in the context of Kazakhstan

has been a particularly rewarding challenge as it has forced the government to consider what constitutes terrorism versus freedom of speech and forms of non-violent expression.

IFES collaborated on edits to Chapter 17 of Part II of the textbook on “NGOs in Kazakhstan” with several local experts and organizations such as the “Zubr” Foundation (Oskemen), “Samal” Center (Pavlodar), Institute for Development Cooperation (Almaty) and Society of Women’s Initiatives Support (Uralsk) to gather information and their success stories to be included in the book as an example of Kazakhstani NGOs activity. IFES additionally consulted with lawyers of the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) to consult them on issues regarding the legal status of NGOs in Kazakhstan.

IFES edited Chapter 18 of Part II on Women and Democracy and added material on feminism, gender balance and the protection of women’s rights. Material added included information on the percentage of women in state bodies in Kazakhstan, an analysis of gender balance in government and women’s rights development strategies for Kazakhstan based on current governmental data and United Nations standards. IFES continued contacting local NGOs and initiative groups in different regions of Kazakhstan to get information to round out the remaining chapters of Part II, including for chapters on NGOs in Kazakhstan, Women in Democracy, and Active Citizenship. IFES added information on women’s status in society, role of women in democracy and civil society. This chapter required many changes since IFES decided to broaden the topic and delve deeper into the problem of women’s status in society in addition women’s participation in politics.

The IFES textbook Project Coordinator continued to work with other team members on edits and revisions to Volume 1 of the Kazakh language version, conducting a final review of chapters 6-11 in Kazakh. The Project Coordinator reviewed draft questionnaires for students, teachers and graduates in Russian for monitoring and evaluation. IFES obtained Kazakhstan Academy of Education Director Jukeshev’s signature for his earlier written book review to be included in the civic education textbook teacher’s guide, which is seen as an important official endorsement. IFES also completed a 70-page “generic” teacher’s guide on the use of interactive classroom teaching methodologies which is applicable to courses including and outside of civics.

In addition to revising the chapters in Parts I and II, IFES’ textbook team prepared a new acknowledgment page that will appear inside the front cover of the book, and took care of formally copywriting the publication by securing an ISBN number.

Civics Textbook Monitoring and Evaluation

The IFES-Kazakhstan civic education team reviewed and edited a survey in Russian to be sent to teachers and students (both current students and graduates²) to evaluate the effectiveness of the textbook and its impact on their lives. Integral to the civic education project is qualitative monitoring of the results, both short and long term. The very nature of the project may lend itself more to longer-term results, though impacts in the short term can be measured as well. The draft version of the survey questionnaires for

² Students who had already completed at least one part of the IFES civic education textbook as part of a civics course, and who have already graduated from secondary school.

teachers, students and graduates were updated with more questions related to evaluation of civic education projects such as the IFES Summer Leadership Schools³, Student Action Committees and Student Local Government Days as well as with questions needed to complete USAID indicators. Results from these surveys will be included in IFES' monitoring and evaluation data at the end of the quarter and school year (in the next quarter).

IFES' Textbook Administrative Assistant finished contacting participating schools to confirm existing classroom data and update the database to include the number of students and teachers participating in the textbook project from Atyrau, Ekibastuz, Kostanai, Kokshetau, Temirtau Karaganda, Taraz, Astana and Petropavlovsk. The inclusion of quantitative data is being augmented by qualitative data that is being gathered during the course of the school year to measure impact of the civics course and textbook. Exit examinations toward that end will assess improvement in the comprehension of the basic concepts of civics and democracy since the students began the course last autumn.

IFES' Chief of Party Jennifer Wilson and Senior Project Coordinator Marat Bigaliev met with IFES regional project coordinators from South-Kazakhstan and Akmolinsk oblasts. They discussed successes and issues of all IFES projects as part of the regular monitoring and evaluation cycle. IFES was able to assist in developing solutions to some problems related to distribution of the civics textbook. Both Regional Coordinators confirmed that many schools are interested in the course and that increasing the number of schools will not be a problem so long as textbooks and trainings are provided. This is largely the methodology employed in the process of adding new schools; when training of teachers is conducted in a new region, schools will invariably learn about the training and request to become a part of it. While the effort may at times appear piecemeal, IFES has been able to add a great number of schools in this manner during the course of the project. It has been evident that a great number of schools desire to become part of the project, and would integrate the IFES book into the existing curriculum on civics. Although the desired result would be to maintain a separate, stand alone civics course with the IFES textbook as the centerpiece, the reality is that the IFES book has not yet been placed by the Ministry of Education on the list of "approved textbooks" and is thus used as a supplementary publication in many cases. As the Ministry of Education continues to redefine state standards in civics and integrate a twelfth grade of study into the national education system, different resources are being used in the study of civic education, including the IFES textbook. The IFES textbook's successful track record in Kazakhstan, positive reviews received therein (especially from teachers and students), and close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and related institutions portends favorably for an increased use of the book in forthcoming years.

National Education Conference

IFES' Project Coordinator liaised with Kazakhstan Academy of Education Vice-President Ms. Jadrina to discuss organizational issues concerning the upcoming Conference "Development of National Education Standards as a Framework for

³ Formerly known as the IFES "Democracy Summer Camps".

Outcome-based School Education” and obtained the draft agenda of the event, which was being jointly developed. Ms. Jadrina also discussed the role envisioned for IFES in organization and conducting of the event. The plan was forwarded to the IFES Chief of Party and Senior Project Coordinator for their review, which led to a series of recommendations for the conference agenda and list of invited persons, including speakers. Based on mutual agreement, IFES (with funding provided through the U.S. Academy for Educational Development) nominated Simon Jenkins (civic education specialist from New Zealand) and Professor William Fierman (Indiana University) as international speakers. It also nominated, based on the Ministry’s recommendation, Dr. Efim Kogan (Samara, Russian Federation) as an additional speaker to round out the IFES contingent. Each would have a specific theme to present that contributed to the overall discussion. The conference was scheduled to take place in Astana from April 11-12.

Republican Student Tournaments and Training of Teachers

On March 18 – 19, 2006, IFES, in coordination with the Ministry of Education, conducted its seventh annual Republican Students Tournament. For the second consecutive year separate and parallel tournaments were held in the Kazakh and Russian languages. Concurrently with the tournaments, IFES conducted a review/impact/training session for trainers and teachers who had accompanied the students from all regions of the country. Both events were held at the Republican Teachers Re-training Institute (RTI), which graciously allowed usage of its facilities for the events in a demonstration of solidarity and partnership with IFES. Another reason for holding the events at the RTI was to obtain the Ministry’s input in terms of institutionalizing the training component with the work of the RTI and its regional departments. This review/impact/training session was the third event IFES has jointly conducted with the RTI in the past six months.

Republican Student Tournaments

In preparation for the regional civic education tournaments that determined the finalists to participate in the national tournament from each region, IFES contacted regional education officials and coordinators to discuss any problems with preparation for the regional tournaments. There are some problems with inclusion of students from rural schools located far from oblast centers in South-Kazakhstan and Akmolinsk due to severe weather and bad road conditions. After discussions with coordinators it was agreed that those rural schools would hold rayon tournaments and select only one finalist to participate the oblast tournament. IFES provided them with additional certificates for use in rayon tournaments.

IFES developed documents needed to conduct regional tournaments. The following information was prepared and sent to regional coordinators and local department officials:

- 1) A letter about the tournament from the MoE to regional DoE;
- 2) Regulations in Kazakh and Russian;
- 3) A letter from IFES to local coordinators and officials about tournaments issues;
- 4) Tests for the first round of the regional tournament in Kazakh and Russian;

- 5) Updated lists of schools by regions;
- 6) Agreements and ethic code documents to be signed by local coordinators.

IFES regional coordinators conducted qualifying tournaments in the following regions:

- Kokshetau;
- Taraz;
- Aktobe;
- Kostanay;
- Semipalatinsk;
- Uralsk;
- Kyzylorda.

IFES conducted the Almaty regional tournament on Friday, March 3. There were ten students from ten schools who competed in Russian and Kazakh languages. Students from Otegen Batyr (schools 13 and 38) won the tournament. These students participated in the Republican Tournament on March 17 – 18, 2006.

On Friday, March 17th, the regional teachers/trainers and students began to arrive in Almaty. In total, fifteen Russian and sixteen Kazakh speaking students competed in the event all day Saturday and into Sunday afternoon. During the first day, students competed in several qualifying rounds of activities measuring knowledge of civics, government and civil society. Some of the rounds were strictly knowledge based, while others incorporated teamwork and creativity.



A student delivers his PowerPoint presentation to a panel of judges during the second day off the Republican Civics Tournament.

The second day was completely devoted to the students' individual presentations. All students from the first day made presentations on the second, and none were eliminated prior to their individual presentations. Students prepared their presentations in advance prior to departing to Almaty for the Republic Tournament. The presentations varied in content and delivery. The students' topics ranged from children's rights, gender equality, and other topics covered in the

IFES textbook related to citizenship, civic knowledge and government. In delivery of their presentations, students employed everything from 'old fashioned' posters to 'modern' PowerPoint presentations as shown in the picture.

Karlygash Myrzhakhanova, Head of the Primary and Secondary Education Sub-department, represented the Ministry of Education at the Tournament. She attended the opening ceremony and entire second day of the event and became much more aware of IFES projects. She obtained copies of students' presentations to use with the Ministry in

their work and research. She also welcomed the participants at the opening ceremony and thanked IFES and other partners for partnership at the closing ceremonies.

United States Ambassador John Ordway attended the closing ceremony. He spoke to the students, presented awards and held a roundtable discussion with the eight finalists. He spoke to the students in Russian and presented awards. Ambassador Ordway expressed his satisfaction with the event, and praised the students for their creativity, intelligence and ability to discuss a wide range of topics.



USAID Democracy Officer Dina Khassenova also attended the closing ceremony.

Ambassador Ordway with two finalists and their teacher

The event was covered by the local media. There was one TV Company “Almaty” (broadcasting the event in Kazakh and Russian languages) and one education journal present.

The six judges (three for the Kazakh group and three for the Russian group) represented a variety of institutions. Among them were two from the Republican Teachers Re-Training Institute, two from the Kazakh Academy of Education, one teacher, a lawyer from the Almaty Law University and one civic education teacher from Almaty International School.

The IFES Communication Coordinator approached a variety of companies to discuss sponsorship possibilities for the Republican Tournament. Sponsors typically provide prizes for students and other means of support. In-kind donations to be used as prizes for tournament winners were secured, including encyclopedias, calendars, and t-shirts. Additionally, *ExxonMobil* provided eight books and forty calendars for winners, the trade company *Economics* donated ten Encyclopedias and *Motorola* agreed to donate two cell phones. *KPMG* provided financial support and *ABDI* also donated prizes for all students at the Tournament. *ABDI's* Representative, Rita Baikhuatova, graciously attended the whole tournament, welcomed participants and awarded prizes. *KPMG* representative Karlygash Kaltaeva also attended the closing ceremony.

Teacher Training

IFES held a training event for regional trainers and teachers in parallel with the Republican Tournament. IFES staff along with four regional trainers jointly conducted the two-day training. A total of 40 teachers (20 in the Russian group and 20 in the Kazakh group) attended from every region of Kazakhstan to learn interactive teaching methodology and about civic education developments. Representatives from South-Kazakhstan and Almaty City Teachers Institute were also in attendance.

Students work in a group during one of the Civics Tournament activities



IFES' Project Coordinator met with Ms. Akbota from Republican Teacher Re-Training Institute, who wants to replicate IFES' training for teachers. IFES enthusiastically provided her with the necessary materials on interactive teaching and IFES' training module. IFES continually strives for sustainability of its programs, and empowering education officials to replicate training of teachers is an ongoing high priority for the project. Embedding the training program within the Re-training institute provides a solid foundation for institutionalization of the methodology and replication for future training of teachers of civics and other subjects.

Student Action Committees (SAC)

IFES conducted a number of Student Action Committee trainings and projects during the quarter. In South Kazakhstan oblast IFES worked with a graduate of one of IFES' pilot schools to discuss further implementation of SACs in his former secondary school. The effort was a typical example of former students, in this case one currently attending a university in Almaty, stepping up to give back to the project. As a result of the meeting some ideas were given to him, which he wants to share with his former teacher and students at the school. The IFES Project Coordinator also requested that he write a brief essay on his experience with IFES and its projects to be included into the book together with other book reviews.

The IFES team traveled to Taldykorgan on January 5 – 6 to conduct three SAC training sessions. IFES conducted a session for 24 adult teachers and deans of extracurricular activities in schools. The IFES Program Assistant worked with 15 Kazakh speaking students and the Senior Project Coordinator worked with 17 Russian speaking students. A total of 56 participants from 22 schools attended the two-day training. The first day was devoted to the SAC concept in theory including an explanation of the SAC goals, structure, relationship with the school administration and local governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as information about establishing and managing an SAC. Each SAC elected their President and members for three different sectors and Councils. On the second day all participants played a role-playing game in order to practice students' organizational, team building and presentation skills.

Results from the training evaluation showed that 79% of students found sessions to be "very useful," 21% - "useful," 28% said that the training met expectations and goals "strongly," 50% - "fairly well," and 22% - "partly." As for teachers, results show that 30% of them found sessions "very useful" and 65% - "useful"; 88% said that the training met expectations and goals. IFES is expecting new SACs to be established in spring 2006 and during the 2006-2007 school year in Taldykorgan city and nearby rural areas.

IFES updated information for its SAC website in Russian, which serves as a clearinghouse of information for use by all SAC members in Kazakhstan.



IFES organized and conducted a two-day training in Taraz on February 11-12, 2006. The participants of the training included 39 students and 21 from 16 secondary schools of Taraz and Karatav Cities, five educational officials from the Youth Center under Oblast Democracy (ICD) representatives, who participated in the training. The event was conducted with the help of the “Youth Center” and Oblast Education Department.

Students participate in SAC training in Taraz

IFES trainers introduced teachers and students with methodological and practical instruments for their subsequent use at schools. The entire training was conducted using interactive methods, where participants were constantly asked questions and freely expressed their ideas, and trainers summarized and made conclusions from all of their comments. The second day was devoted to a role-playing game. This exercise followed the normal pattern as has been done by IFES at its democracy summer camps. IFES trainers explained the role-playing exercise, its rules and regulations, the importance of the charter, the role of the president, council and each sector, and stressing the need for solid communications with the people and organizations the SACs are going to work with. During the role-playing game students had roles of members of two SACs representing two schools, with others playing the role of ordinary citizens. Teachers, volunteers and trainers played the role of adult citizens: the three teachers acted as local newspaper employees, two trainers as SAC advisors, with individual teachers playing the roles of local businessman, lawyers, head of city Department of Education, head of the local committee coordinating youth activities, representatives of local NGOs, director of the computer club, and head of the International Red Cross.

The advisors provided students with general directions on the ongoing situation in the city. The students defined the problems existing in their city, chose problems to focus on, defined the solutions and after made presentations on their plans to address the problems. Each SAC worked separately to distribute the roles and defined their activities further. Then SACs started to gather information about the city and its problems, defined the problems and to investigate possible solutions.



Two sample SACs were created:

An SAC named “Teenagers” concentrated on the computer literacy and environment, while an SAC named “Bright Future” focused on addressing the drug problem.

These two SACs created action plans to address the problems by:

- 1) establishing contacts with the local NGO that agreed to help with teachers/staff;
- 2) establishing contacts with city Department of Education and local committee coordinating youth activities;

- 3) writing an article to the local newspaper about current situation of youth free time, highlighting the case of drug addicted children, which was picked up by a local newspaper and influenced city officials, who provided a meeting space and wrote a support letter for the SAC;
- 4) requesting specific building materials and assistance with specialists from a local company after calculating reconstruction costs for a youth meeting building (a local company provided the SAC with necessary materials and specialists, and in addition gave a check for 1000 tenge);
- 5) With the help of a local NGO, the SAC organized a charity concert, where they actively advertised their sponsor (a local company).

During lunchtime, teachers and trainers met to discuss how the role-playing game was proceeding and to express their ideas, comments and observations. The teachers made the following comments which contributed to the lessons learned for future trainings:

- Students need more consultations before role-playing game, both juridical and methodological;
- Students should be a more serious about role-playing game;
- There was as somewhat uneven division of power among sectors. Sectors' functions sometimes overlapped, and everybody wanted to be involved in every process of problem solving (fundraising, PR, etc.);
- Initially somewhat incomplete workplans of SACs;
- A relatively weak coordination of activities. Since it was students' first experience, advisors made appropriate suggestions on improvement.

However, everybody agreed that the above-mentioned issues were due to the newness of the activity to participants and their relative lack of experience.

In the afternoon, the SACs worked on their reports, compiled portfolios, and presented their works. Before it, the Fin/Admin Assistant and the Program Assistant analyzed the role-playing game. By analyzing the role-playing game, the trainers concluded that students need more deep and detailed explanation of how SACs work with their environment. It is necessary to explain (advisably by giving practical tasks) how SACs build relationships and communicate with surrounding partner organizations.

According to the presentations, each school is ready to form a SAC. In general, first of all, the students together with their teachers (possible future advisors) are planning to visit the school administration and tell about the training and SAC projects. The students believe that forming SACs will not cause any problem with the school administration. Then, they are going make SAC project presentations in their classes and schools, and create initiative groups interested in SAC activities.

In the beginning of their independent activities it is likely that SACs will primarily deal with in-school problems. After gaining some experience, they will concentrate more on community problems.

After the presentations, trainers summarized the training, answered the questions, and concluded the training by distributing certificates for participants. All participants received SAC manuals, draft copies of the new SAC brochure on projects, and handouts on fundraising.

Other meetings in Taraz

IFES staff met with several officials from the oblast department, Akimat and Oblast teachers' institute.

The director of the Oblast teachers' institute expressed continuing interest in teachers' trainings and possible technical support from IFES. The Deputy Head of the Internal Department of the Oblast Akimat, which is responsible for education and youth programs, expressed an interest in IFES civic education programs and promised to support in any further IFES trainings or projects. Another interest has been rising in regard to the IFES Summer Leadership School. They provided an idea to join school and university leaders together with the purpose to spread the SAC model among universities and institutes. This would be a significant success achieved, as IFES has thus far only focused the SAC program on secondary schools.



IFES Senior Project Coordinator Marat Bigaliev meets with school officials in Taraz

IFES' Senior Project Coordinator visited two schools in Taraz (45, 41) to meet with principals, teachers and students to evaluate projects and the conducting of the civics course. Although students in both schools demonstrated high energy and exuberance, there appeared to be a lack of sufficient quantities of textbooks for students and teachers guides. Monitorings of this sort are valuable to understand implementation of the

projects on the local level and to troubleshoot areas of need; in this case IFES learned that additional copies of the book need to be sent together with the organization of additional teacher training sessions.

Student Action Committee Forum

IFES finalized plans for holding its Student Action Committee Forum in Almaty in April. IFES informed SACs nationwide of the event and worked with its regional coordinators to organize the participation of local SACs and plan for their travel to Almaty. During the quarter, IFES' team in Almaty searched for an appropriate venue and contacted several local and international companies to obtain support for the event. The SAC Forum, which has become an annual event, brings the best and brightest SAC members and activities from across the country together to showcase their projects and compare experiences. A key to success of the program is the participation of education officials, who get a perspective on students' abilities and creativity in conducting these extracurricular activities. Sustainability of the project will depend upon the support of

education officials as well as the experience of SACs to be handed down to successive groups of students who will participate in succeeding years.

Student Local Government Day (SLGD)

950 copies of the new SLGD manual were printed. These new manuals will be used during upcoming SLGD projects in spring 2006, distribution for which was underway across Kazakhstan during the quarter. SLGD activities will take place during the next programmatic quarter.

Summer Leadership Schools (SLS)

IFES finished working on an informational letter and questionnaire in Kazakh and Russian to be distributed to potential summer leadership school participants. IFES will be confirming an SLS location during the next quarter and making arrangements in earnest once the school year comes to a close.

Astana

IFES held a number of meetings in Astana through its regional office that were critical to the ongoing programmatic effort. IFES met with the “12-Year Education Center” to discuss and evaluate the IFES civics program as appropriate for the twelfth grade, and IFES provided information and models of curriculum organization from global experience that were of value. IFES conducted a small seminar for seven people from the Center that included a demonstration of one of the IFES Civic Education lessons including objectives for the lesson itself and for the tasks used. It was important that Center officials understand the necessity of having objectives established before any lesson is carried out. IFES conducted a training seminar observed by Center officials for students from a local school, and tasked them preparing essays on Civics and Citizenship. Students brainstormed aspects of the essay and how they can be evaluated by the teachers and regarded as part of their final grade for a civics course. Use of essays to augment standard testing was seen as a better, more complete way to measure knowledge and achievement. IFES has been in a position to recommend new ways of student evaluation that the Grade 12 Center has shown keen interest in, which has led to the conclusion that further collaboration in the area of student evaluation, is very much sought by the Kazakhstani side.

The 12-Year Center really expressed support for the evaluation method, except one official who actually thought that it gave too much power to students. The Project Coordinator and others pointed out that it is the teachers’ role to guide the students and facilitate the class so that it stays on track.

They used another task from the book that establishes criteria and demonstrates that most responsibility for learning lies on the students rather than the teachers. Some of the criteria were to learn to think logically, express one’s own opinion, get good marks, have good researching skills and to be an active citizen of their country. They also discussed who is responsible for the learning process – i.e. 80% student, 10% teacher, 10% parent.

III. PARTNERS

USAID

The Chief of Party and the Senior Project Coordinator consistently met with Dina Khassenova on a monthly basis to provide her with an update on the current status of IFES projects.

On February 27, the Chief of Party met with Kim Delaney, Sean Roberts and Dina Khassenova to talk about IFES' election assessment and recommendations from the December 4, 2005 elections and to update them on information that IFES has learned through communication with the CEC. Everyone was interested in hearing the news and there were some interesting discussions about what might be good areas for future assistance if USAID decides to include technical election assistance in the new strategy. USAID made it clear that the new strategy has not been developed and that additional funding was unclear.

All USAID partners were interested in the letter from the CEC to the MOE about election (civics) education in schools and universities. Dina Khassenova agreed to review the two chapters on elections and provide comments to IFES in an effort to prepare them for presentation to the CEC. On March 3, the Chief of Party and the Senior Project Coordinator met with Khassenova to discuss the chapters, and she provided some good feedback and suggested making alterations to some sections and terms that may be unclear.

Lauren Frese from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs was in town to discuss education, democracy and development issues. She talked about several programs currently being implemented in South Asia that could potentially be brought to Kazakhstan. Many of the projects are similar to those already being implemented through IFES' civic education program. IFES familiarized Ms. Frese with the IFES civic education portfolio and provided her with a copy of the civics textbook currently being used in Kazakhstan. Frese then accompanied IFES to visit a pilot school in Almaty. She was impressed by the program and the active participation of both the students and teacher.

Ministry of Education

The Senior Project Coordinator met with Mr. Semchenko, Deputy Director of the Republican Re-training Institute (RTI) in Almaty. He discussed possible joint projects and presented RTI's plans for 2006 for review. IFES' Senior Project Coordinator was informed that the MOE announced a tender (competition) among education organizations such as RTI, "Textbook" Center and twelve year center to conduct teachers' trainings and deal with issues related to the improvement of qualification of teachers.

IFES sent a letter to the Minister with the request to review and update the Ministry's forward to the textbook and create a support-letter for IFES to be shown to donors.

By invitation of the 12-Year Education Center, IFES made a presentation of its civic education course at a meeting in RTI with education officials, experts and specialists. These people in cooperation with the Center are responsible for discussing, developing and designing new education standards, curriculum and textbooks. IFES staff were able to introduce in Russian and Kazakh the concept of the IFES materials, teaching methods used, and different evaluation and grading tools. All participants received a copy of a draft textbook or teachers guide for review.

The Director of the 12-year Center, Mrs. Zheksenbaeva, arranged another meeting with IFES on the next day. She is personally interested to know more on IFES' materials and the methodology that IFES uses in its textbooks. She invited and introduced other textbooks authors to the IFES project coordinators. The purpose is that those authors will be developing new state textbooks for the 12 year education system and the civics course is going to be one of the components of the state mandatory course named "Social science" (?????????????). That subject will be taught to all students from grades 5 to 12 and will include the subjects including civics, law, economy, politology and sociology. They have requested that IFES be a member of the working group for developing new social science textbooks. As they indicated, they do not need to create a new course, just to use and adapt materials developed and piloted by IFES on civics.

Other Organizations

The Chief of Party and the Communication Coordinator met with Mr. I.V. Ilyin, deputy warden of the Emergency Service Department for Almaty city. They discussed possibilities for a joint project on earthquake preparedness in detail. The Emergency Service Department is very interested in working with IFES and GeoHazards International to train KSK and KSD representatives. They are willing to write a letter of support for the project and can contribute existing resources such as the use of their training center, trainers and materials that have been developed.

The Chief of Party met with Alem Slibayev from the Kazakhstani Young Professionals Association (KYP). KYP is interested in developing a project designed to promote democratic culture among university students. They have already begun discussions with *Khabar* TV station about having a televised reality show on university elections. The overall project would include the development of an election system for universities, selection of three universities who want to implement the system and trainings/workshops for school administrators and students prior to the actual election process to be televised in 15-20 minute episodes daily for 2-3 weeks. KYP sees IFES as a logical partner for the project to assist with the development of an election system for universities. They are also looking for financial support. IFES' Chief of Party provided KYP with copies of the SAC manual for consideration as materials that can be adapted for universities.

IFES' Chief of Party met with Galina Melnikova, an Excellence in Teaching (State Department's TEA program) alumna from Ust Kamenogorsk. She teaches civics at her school in English using materials obtained in the U.S. She would like to be more involved with IFES' project. IFES' Project Coordinator suggested that she might be involved with a teacher training seminar and IFES suggested that she can network with other civics teachers in Ust Kamenogorsk. Melnikova is interested only in English language materials and was given a draft copy of volume one of the teacher's guide.

IV. MATERIALS PRODUCED

- New promotional brochures on civic education projects were finalized in English and Russian. They will be printed in early April.
- 1000 copies of the updated SLGD manual printed. IFES managed to get a discount and print the color manuals.
- IFES developed a new SAC brochure called "DDD" ('We Do Kind Things'). It will be printed in April.
- IFES also prepared English and Russian versions of brochures highlighting IFES' civic education programming portfolio, specifically the SACs, SLGDs, Summer Camps, and Textbook projects.

V. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Ministry Changes

Among the most significant developments and project achievements of the quarter, IFES notes that two Ministry of Education vice-ministers (Aisina and Gamarnik) were dismissed and will not be replaced. There are now only two vice-ministers, and Azamat Abdymomunov has taken over responsibilities for all Ministry departments that IFES works with. The reorganization was the result of criticism by the President regarding overstaffing, duplication of work and ineffective management within the Ministry.

Printing of Textbook

IFES drafted letters in Russian and English for distribution to Embassies and other potential donors to be contacted in regards to fundraising for printing and distribution of the new textbook. IFES' current agreement pays for limited printing and distribution of the book in Kazakh and Russian, with IFES seeking outside funding to facilitate wider printing. Acknowledgement of all donors will appear within the textbook.

Annual Republican Civics Tournament

The 2006 Tournament proved challenging in terms of attracting corporate donor support. For-profit companies are willing to support any projects except those which specifically were designed to support "democracy" due to sensitivities within the country with international funding of such initiatives. While this was more prominent before the presidential elections in December, it did affect IFES' ability to attract a wider spectrum of financial and in-kind support for its winter and spring projects.

Textbook Sustainability

To achieve IFES' objective of distributing the textbook to all schools in Kazakhstan, IFES needs to work with the 12-Year Center and the working group for Social Science (5-12 forms). IFES was concerned that the course would be dropped but the 12-Year Center reassured IFES that they are picking up the book and incorporating it into the Social Science course.

IFES met with Mrs. Rakhimzhanova, Head of the Textbook Department to discuss issues related to the inclusion of IFES' textbook into the list of approved books and the evaluation process as conducted by the Textbook Center. IFES submitted a revised version for review in November 2005, though by the end of the quarter the Textbook Center had not yet responded. IFES also received a copy of the state standards that all textbooks must meet for consideration of acceptance, and made adjustments accordingly.

IFES continued to put its local, Kazakh-speaking staff out in front on many initiatives as a way of promoting sustainability of the projects as well as gaining greater access to decision-makers and key partners. With Kazakh language playing a greater role in everyday official life, using local experts in conducting project activities is seen as responsive and progressive in meeting the needs of local clients.

NGO Legislation

The Chief of Party and one of the Program Assistants attended a round-table on NGO legislation at ICNL. Many people are concerned that issues related to the law on NGOs are rising again in Kazakhstan (and elsewhere in Central Asia). There is much speculation about the possibilities of a new round of inspections and perhaps a new attempt to introduce NGO legislation.

Elections

IFES met with Chairman Onalsyn Zhumabekov of the Central Election Commission while in Astana and discussed preparations for local Maslikhat elections. The Ministry was eager to know IFES' assistance plans for the year and encouraged IFES' involvement in technical assistance and education initiatives. It sent a letter to the Ministry of Education requesting that a course specifically on elections for high school students be created, and IFES shared the elections chapters from its second volume to serve as a possible resource towards that end. Several informational requests were also received from the CEC on comparative international practice and standards in election administration.

VI. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Performance Indicator	Indicator Definition & Unit of Measure	Data Source	Data for Q2 FY 2006	Cumulative Data FY 2006 (Q1+Q2 so far)	Projections for FY 2006
Curriculum Development					

# of New Students Participating in the Civic Education Course	Student Participation and Reach of the Textbook and New Teaching Methodologies	Participating Schools	New students to be added during the second semester.		Original: Civics classes in 30 schools added, with minimum of 900 new students added; cumulative total of 41,600 students participating at the end of the workplan year. Revised figures to be determined based on printing capacity and final confirmation of participating schools.
Teacher Trainings					
# of teachers participated (# of trainings conducted)	Teacher Participation and Reach of New Teaching Methodologies	IFES	100 teachers and 40 regional education staff participated in 3 trainings on the IFES textbook and 2 SAC trainings	215 teachers and 40 regional education staff participated in 6 trainings on the IFES textbook and 4 SAC trainings	Minimum of 100 regional education staff will be trained by IFES directly and 600 new teachers trained in new methodological schools. Trainings conducted by education staff of participating Teacher Training Institutes.
Student Action Committees					
# New Students Participating in SACs (# of Women)	Student Participation and Reach of Extracurricular Civic Education Activities	Teachers/ Mentors	140 new students (90 female)	185 new students (125 female)	240 students in 2005-2006 Academic Year participating in at least 16 new SAC “events” in a minimum of six new locations. Eight SAC trainings conducted. Existing SACs continue from

					previous years with sustainability index measured and success rate monitored through direct observation by IFES and IFES regional coordinators.
# of SACs Formed (# of Activities)	Reach and Activeness of SACs	Teachers/ Mentors	5 new SACs 17 new activities	8 new SACs 22 new activities	
Student Local Government Days					
# of Students (# of Government Officials) Participating in SLGD	Student Participation and Reach of Extracurricular Civic Education Activities That Promote Real-Life Learning	IFES	0	To be conducted during Q3 period.	200 new students in the 2005-2006 Academic Year, in SLGDs taking place in twelve locations.
Democracy Summer Camps					
# of Camps conducted (# of students participated)	Student Participation and Reach of Extracurricular Civic Education Activities That Promote Real-Life Learning	IFES	0	To be conducted during the summer.	75 students participating in 1 Democracy Summer Camp. Funds permitting, a minimum of 20 students from Kazakhstan will participate in a Regional Democracy Summer Camp at a location to be determined.
Information Resources					
# of Hits on the Website	Awareness and Interest in IFES Resources	IFES	2,367	15,544 (IFES believes the large difference from Q1 is a result of the website being under construction for a long time and just	Increased number of hits to website.

				recently put back online).	
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